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NURSING IN MISSION STATIONS

THE TIENTSIN TRAINING SCHOOL FOR NURSES

BY EVA A. GREGG, R.N.

Tientsin, China

Wu Ting Fang, one of China's greatest statesmen, said that every town which he visited in America claimed to have something which was absolutely the largest thing in the world. We cannot lay claim to being the largest training school but we are the youngest in our conference.

When the school opened, in April, 1915, seven girls entered for training—one a London Mission, one a Methodist, and five American Board school girls. The work was all new to them, most having never even seen a hospital, but they took hold of the work as though they meant business and after a year's training they do very well indeed. As they had only a vague idea of what their work would be, it came as a surprise that they had to do what has always been considered "amah's work. At the end of the two months' probation period, when I called them in one by one and asked them if, after having seen what the work was like, they still wanted to go on with the three years' training, each assured me that if I were willing to keep her, she was willing to stay. One of them said: "Why, I should not have come had I not intended to stay."

We follow as closely as possible the nurses' training school methods of the American hospitals as regards course of study, hours on duty, etc.

The nurses wear regular uniforms, but since white is the color for mourning and a white cap on a Chinese nurse's head would look as cheerful as would an American nurse in a crepe bonnet, we have given them pale blue caps trimmed with white to match their long blue garments. The nurses are proud of their caps and the probationers look forward to the time when they too will have a little blue cap.

One day early last spring the pastor's wife came to me and inquired about one of the nurses. She was a very good nurse and I did not hesitate to recommend her in very glowing terms. A few weeks later I learned that this girl was engaged to the president of the Young Men's Christian Association and when I asked Mrs. Liu about it she said: "O, yes, we were looking for a wife for Mr. W. and thought Miss C. would make a good mother for his motherless children; and your

recommendations just settled the matter. Don't you remember you said she had a very good disposition and was such a fine worker?" Alas! I remembered it all too well. We gave Miss C. a wedding feast at the hospital, after which she left for Wesley Church, where the marriage was to take place, in an automobile accompanied by two of her sister nurses who acted as bridesmaids. She was followed by the good wishes of her many friends expressed in a thoroughly Chinese fashion by the booming of firecrackers. The next time any one comes along inquiring about my nurses I know I shall feel tempted to say that they are homely as mud-fences and have bad tempers. It is my aim to run a nurses' training school and not a matrimonial bureau.

We have a rule that only unmarried girls and widows may enter the school but a young pastor of the English Methodist Mission came with his wife and asked that she be allowed to take the training. She said she wanted to be of greater service to her husband's parishioners. Not wishing to discourage such a worthy ambition we accepted her and she has proved herself a very good nurse indeed.

The nurses have theoretical as well as practical work and we have to thank Mrs. Bayard Lyon, Mr. Chen of the Army and Navy Medical College, Dr. Kwan and Dr. Martin for their faithful class work. Two of the girls who were deficient in English attended classes in the Keen School for a few weeks.

At Christmas time we had a tree for the ambulatory patients and the servants at which the nurses sang "Silent Night, Holy Night" in English. Each nurse was given a beautiful doll from Dr. Filley's Christmas box and you should have seen the way they hugged and kissed those lovely American babies. For the time being the dolls received much more attention than the leather bound Chinese Testaments which I thought they would all be so pleased to have and to carry to church.

All the nurses are Christians and take their turn in leading morning prayers and in helping in the Sunday School, which is held in the waiting room of the dispensary on Sunday afternoons. A hundred or more street urchins come every week and most of them hear the story of Jesus Christ for the first time.

Two girls from the government school have made application to enter the school this autumn, which pleases us very much. The nursing profession is comparatively new in China and the better educated class of girls is just beginning to want to take the training.

We were glad to welcome Clara J. Sauer in December. She will spend a year or more in the language school before taking up her duties in the hospital.